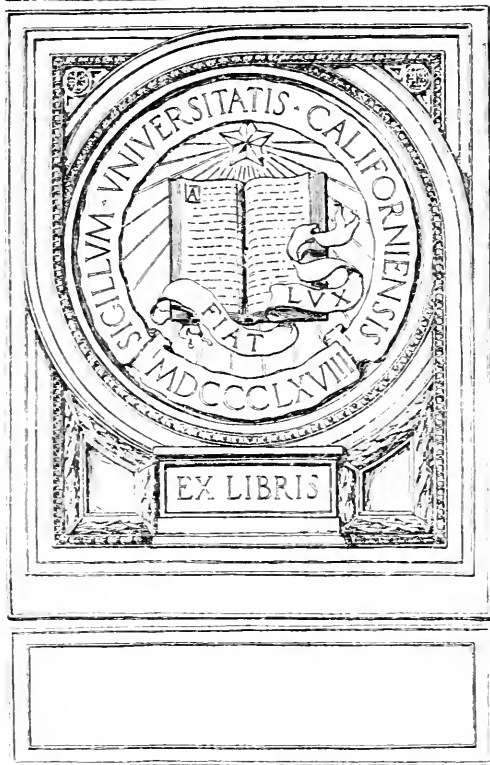


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CINCINNATI

LETTERS OF HIRAM POWERS TO NICHOLAS
LONGWORTH, ESQ., 1856-1858.

Sept. 17, 1856.

N. Longworth, Esqr.:

My Dear Friend—Your letter containing one from Hon: Mr. Pugh reached me in due time and I meant to have answered it sooner but have failed from various causes 'till now.

The statements of the President to Mr. Pugh are far from truthful, if I except the one that I had offered my statue at private sale. The case was this:—

I had waited for years, as you know, for an order from Congress (my statue had already been on hand, tho unfinished for several years) when the order for Mr. Mills' statue of Washington passed both houses of Congress in one day and *unanimously*. An amendment to the bill proposing to purchase my "America" was rejected in terms so discouraging, in short, on the ground that it might, "encumber the bill", that on hearing of it I instantly gave up all hope of ever receiving a Government order, and as I had been asked to set a price upon the statue, I determined to do so, and to sell it for the most I could get. I put the price, as I supposed, within the reach of a private individual, (Mr. — of New York) but received no answer to my letter, and I thought no more about it. Indeed, I do not know that my letter was ever received. But Mr. — made me an offer for the statue, a year or two later, which I refused, for this was subsequent to the passage of the order by Congress. How the President heard of this I am not quite sure, but have good reasons for believing that an artist here, for whom in former times I have done almost as much as I would do for a brother, and who knew of the fact, informed the Editor of the Richmond *Enquirer* of it with a view to its reaching the President, and thus injuring me. The Editor of that paper declared to a gentleman now here, that he got it all from a person in Florence who knew me well and who charged me also, with being a rank abolitionist, and so, all has been published in the Richmond *Enquirer*.

Now, I never intended this present statue for the Government, but meant, if I should ever receive an order, to repeat it on a colossal scale, and such I got Mr. Everett to offer to the President, or the present one, just as might suit the views of the President. I thought the wording of the amendment would justify the President in receiving the present statue, nevertheless, I offered a larger one. Mr. Pugh says nothing of this in his letter, and it would appear that the President did not name it to him. A photograph of the statue was sent to the President nearly or quite a year ago, and yet, according to Mr. Pugh's letter, the President wanted to see one! Here are two important omissions of facts, as samples of the fairness of the President's statements as given by Mr. Pugh, and deeming them sufficient to show the character of the whole, I shall not fill up the sheet with further corrections. I have however, taken the liberty of sending a copy of Mr. Pugh's letter to Mr. Everett with comments upon every part of it—all going to show how unfairly to say the least of it—I have been treated.

I have not asked for a commission from the Government, nor have I ever asked a member of Congress or any one else to say or do anything for me in this way. What has been done has been voluntarily, and most grateful I am for it all, but I am not likely to receive the benefit of it, for the conditions proposed by the President are such that I cannot consent to them. He expects me to send my finished marble statue to Washington City and set it up there to be examined by a committee of his appointment, as to its "fitness" and the "price." This I am expected to do at my own risk and expense! I have declined acceding to this proposal and prefer to wait in the hope that his successor will deal with me in a less humiliating manner. There will yet be about 3 months time left for an arrangement after President Pierce retires from the Government, and before the appropriation must necessarily pass to the surplus fund. I may lose the commission, and I have prepared as well as I can for such a misfortune. It would prevent our coming home for some years yet, and that grieves me more than any other consideration. Surely it was not for the President to listen to stories about my having offered to sell my work for less than Congress was long after willing to give me for it, and especially after I had offered to repeat it on a colossal scale. Con-

gress gave the order; he had nothing to do but to execute the duty assigned him, and if my disappointments and necessities compelled me to offer my statue for less, surely the Government should not take advantage of them. No other artist has been so treated by a President; and I can perceive nothing but the most decided hostility in every thing he has done. His neglect to answer Mr. Everett's letters, evasions, misinterpretations, all tending to prolong the time, with a view, as I firmly believe, to finally thwarting the intentions of Congress, and especially of my friends there, have so mortified and disgusted me, that I would almost rather lose the entire appropriation than now receive the slightest favour at his hands, and it is evident that Mr. Pugh agrees with him, for he argues quite upon his side. The Amendment says—"for a work done or to be done" (if I rightly remember it) and not for works done and to be done. Is it not clear that a statue *already in hand* was meant, or another of larger dimensions? The *movers* of the measure so understood it and framed the amendment so as to cover my statue of "America", but I will not attempt to argue my own case. I can only feel how hard it is, after waiting so long and at length feeling so sure, and joyous and grateful too, to have all fall to the ground, upon the pretense, that I have offered my work to an individual for less than the amount of the appropriation. I trust however that there are other resources within reach far more reliable than the Government, and that it will not be *very* long before I can see you again, not much the worse for this disappointment. Mr. Pugh intimates that it would not have been courteous for the President to write to me over Mr. Everett's head, after I had confided the case to him (Mr. E.). Why, the President promised *Mr. Everett* that he *would* write to me and allow Mr. E. to see the letter before sending it! which however, he never did. This was what Mr. E. wanted him to do, or in *some way* to commit himself to *some* course in writing. He *told* Mr. E. that he thought the wording of the amendment would justify his receiving "America", but has never done this in writing. In short, he has never meant to make the commission good to me. Mr. Pugh ought not to have taken "for granted" all the President told him, and he would not have done so had he entertained the slightest sympathy for his absent countryman, knowing as he must how little dependence can be

placed upon the word of the present Chief Magistrate of the United States, who promised your friend, Mrs. McLean also, that he would immediately write to me, but never did it. Indeed what promise has he ever kept?

My case is a small affair compared to that which affects our whole country and now causes the greatest anxiety throughout the land. Senator Douglas and President Pierce found the country in the enjoyment of peace and the greatest prosperity. Never was there so fine an opportunity for a glorious administration—uncommitted and free as no other President ever was. Genl Pierce had only to adopt the simple maxim, “honesty is the best policy” and with moderate ability we might have gone on a peaceful and thriving nation and, he would have stood in history among the most honorable of our Presidents, but ambitious to serve again and unscrupulous he has betrayed his post, betrayed all parties, lost the confidence of all, and on the 4th of March next, will walk down the door steps of the White house, not as honest old John Quincy Adams did,—a faithful though sometimes erring public servant, but still to serve again to the end of his life in the national councils. No! Genl Pierce will walk down a recreant traitor to his country and his friends. He will sink below the level of an honest labourer in the field, for though poor in the world’s goods, he still possesses a world’s wealth in a good conscience, but President Pierce will have nothing to console him beyond the means of bodily support. There will be none so poor as to do him reverence. The lowest of the Presidents, he will not be recognised as a worthy citizen, and if he escapes hisses wherever he goes, it will be not from any personal respect, but because there is a dignity in the name of President which chastens indignation, and shelters the man under the mantle of the office. The wrong he has done me is as a drop of lost venom, shed from reeking fangs fixed in the breast of my dear country which now struggles in perhaps a mortal agony. I have no idea that our difficulties will end without a revolution, for excitement has become too great to go back without blows.

It seems hardly possible that two miserable Demagogues have thus paralyzed a great country and arrayed its citizens against one another, but we know that a small viper can kill a giant and crawl to his hole unharmed, and almost if not quite unconscious of the evil he has done.

When will our people learn wisdom and appoint proper Governors? It is said that there is no people which does not *deserve* its rulers, and the saying will certainly apply with truth to us, if we ever appoint another General Pierce. It is consoling to see, by the papers, that our people are waking up from the deadly apathy into which they had fallen, and it may not be too late to act. If successful, let them fumigate the Capitol with sulphur, and on the 4th of March kindle bonfires and fire guns all over the land to mark the day of redemption from the vilest corruption that ever disgraced any country.

I have watched the progress of political events in our country during the last 3 or 4 years with the deepest interest, and as they have followed one another my astonishment has increased, that such things *could* take place in the *United States* without instant chastisement by the people, who on the contrary appear to have looked on, until very lately with almost indifference! Europe looks on with smiles and tears. The Despots grin, and the Liberals weep! and we Americans hang our heads in shame! Is there then no human virtue? no self government? Has God abandoned His people, or have they forever turned from Him? They say here, that the fairest opportunity for self government is under trial in America and if it fails it will prove that the *principle is wrong* and that another attempt should not be made. Stephen Arnold Douglas and Franklin Pierce! do you know how much you have to answer for?

Woe be to our Country generally for a time but particularly to the South, if civil war begins in earnest. There will be—there can be—no peace while a slave exists in America. That frontier line, some thousands of miles in extent, between the slave power and the free power will be a line of fire until one or the other side succumbs. Then there will be no fugitive slave laws, and owners will follow their slaves “over the border” to be met by equally determined freemen—a standing army on one side and a standing army on the other with ample causes of disagreement between.

Our Republican Institutions have grown up with a foreign substance in their body—and like the soldier who carried a bullet in his body, the pain is perpetual. Nature strives to throw out the deadly evil, but it lies too deep to be removed without the knife of the surgeon. It is death to hold it, and it may be death to re-

move it, but one or the other is a necessity, and we have come to this crisis, hurried on by the wanton *probes* of Messrs. Douglas, Pierce and their followers. We must now contemplate that abyss which Mr. Webster turned from with horror—look into it and prepare to leap! The bottom may be deep, and we may be long in reaching it, but rely upon it, we who reach it shall find no *negro slaves* there, whatever ourselves may be.

The present state of our affairs reminds me of a German illustration of political squabbles. The first print shows two individuals, one with a newspaper in his hand and most earnestly calling the other's attention to some article in it. The other smiles good naturedly, and appears disposed to appease the excitement of the other. The next print shows the good natured man in an attitude of argument; he is earnestly reasoning with the other and appears somewhat excited himself. The third print shows the two in an attitude of mutual defiance, and the last shows them both on the ground in a mortal struggle. How far are we from the unsightly posture of these imaginary champions?

A Friend of mine, The Marquiss Ponciattica (you will never pronounce his name) wants to know if you could send him some of your dry Catawba in the barrel, and what it would cost pr. bottle sent in that way. He is a good judge of wine, and says that *there is nothing better than yours*. I sent him a bottle and he speaks of it with enthusiasm. If you tell me what it would cost delivered for shipment in N. York I can estimate the rest. We got the wine you sent me so kindly, very cheaply through the Custom House here. Your namesake told them that it was "some *domestic* wine of America", and they allowed it to pass without examination; a few "crazie" was all he paid, but had they *tasted* it, these crazie would have been *francesconi*! With most affectionate regards from us all,

I am ever your sincere friend,

H. POWERS.

Florence, September 17th, 1856.

N. Longworth, Esqr. :

My Dear Old Friend—Not long ago I received a bill of lading for some more of your wine, but the wine itself has not arrived yet. It will tho in due time, I dare say, and long before the old is out, for we use it only on important occasions, such as, the 4th of July, Washington's birth day, and the natal days of our whole family and ourselves! *Important* occasions are not wanting therefore, but the most important we deem your own birth day mentioned in one of your letters to me. On that day we bring a *pair* of the dry and the sparkling out of the cellar. Every member of the family, even the youngest, have a glass, large or small, to join with, in a toast to the man who is doing more for the cause of Temperance in America than all the Father Mathews in the world. He is supplying a substitute for Alcohol and a remedy for drunkenness. There is no drunkenness anywhere *where good wine is made in abundance*.

Tell this to temperance people who slander the beverage converted from water to wine by our Saviour Himself. Be assured that we fully appreciate your great kindness in sending a new supply of wine, whether from associations or its own intrinsic quality, certainly the best I have ever tasted and the most prized. But what shall I say to the Marquiss Ponciattica (pronounced Ponshattica) ? He wants to know, if you could send him a barrel of the *dry* Catawba, and what it would cost. Do not be at any trouble about this but if you could let him know, I dare say he would desire to have it sent out.

My affair with the Government remains in *statu quo*, nothing has been done by Genl Pierce, except to propose that I should send my statue of "America" to Washington to be examined by a committee appointed by him on the questions of "fitness and the price". Of course the risk and the expense of sending it would be my own, and so would be the folly if I were to do it. I have long since written to Mr. Everett to say, that I will do no such thing, for Congress has settled both these questions already by the wording of the appropriation, "\$25,000 for some work executed or to be executed" clearly alluding to my statue of "America", for I have no other work "executed" and the words or "to be executed" refer to the same statue repeated on a colossal scale should the President deem the latter necessary. The President has admitted

to Mr. Everett, that according to the wording of the amendment (to the civil and diplomatic list), he would be justified in receiving my statue of "America" and paying the sum named for it. But if I remember I have told you as much before.

Of course, I can do nothing, and the time is drawing short, at which the sum appropriated by Congress will pass to the surplus fund, in default of not being drawn out within the term of the limitation act. I expect to lose it all, and have made up my mind to it. And if this should prove the case, why then I shall be just where I was before, excepting that, counting upon it, I have so arranged my little means as to suffer some inconvenience. I must stay here instead of going home with my family, until the good time comes at which I can afford to go home.

We have fallen into the same system in Washington which now prevails generally with the Governments in Europe, viz.,—by paying to all artists alike, and judging by a letter I have lately seen from Capt. Meigs (Commissioner of New Capitol Buildings) about \$6,000 *a piece* for statues is what the Govt expects to pay in future. The consequence will be that artists of any merit will do *slop work* for the government, if they work at all, and take pains for Individuals who pay better—just as they do here.

Apply this rule of paying all alike to other professions, the Law for example.

The fact is, there is now *competition* for commissions at Washington, and works of art can be had at cheap rates, 12 for sixpence and 13 to make up the baker's dozen. These things are very discouraging, and they have induced me to reflect seriously upon my position. My art is profitable, but the expenses of so large a family are great, and consequently my progress in a pecuniary respect is slow. Home we must go ere long for several of my children are grown up and ought not to remain here. I have determined to divide my time for a season between Mechanics and Sculpture in order to make better progress. I have two inventions one of which is already patented and the other soon will be. Both of them I think will be profitable, since they are of a nature to supply a general want. I shall devote as little time as possible to these things and if they succeed well,—if not the loss will not be great.

One of the main objects in it is occupation for Longworth.

whose time is too valuable to be wasted here doing the little I have for him to do, which by the way, he attends to faithfully.

With the \$25,000 voted by Congress my circumstances would have been at this time such as would have allowed us all to return home and remain there, but without it I am—as I am. I am waiting now to see what Mr. Buchanan will do. There will be about 2½ months left after the 4th of March before the money must go to the surplus fund if it is not drawn out of the Treasury. But as I have already said above, I have hardly a hope left in regard to it, for I know that influences will be brought to bear most unfavourably upon Mr. Buchanan. There are people who will do their best to prevent an adjustment of the case. Little did I think two years ago when I heard of the commission that it was to end so, or that there would ever be any difficulty about it. No other artist, native or foreign, has been treated by the Government as I have been. Perhaps the reason is, we have never before had a Genl Pierce for President.

But enough of croaking, "All is well that ends well," and I hope to make a good ending yet.

We have a family of young ones which for general health and appearance do credit at least to the land of their birth, Italy. Longworth is the only one born in America. He has become schoolmaster to the youngest, gives and hears their lessons daily, and a capital schoolmaster he is too. They get on bravely. He sports "the beautiful watch" on *grand occasions*, and keeps it in perfect order—not a scratch or mark upon it. He stays at home and has no wish to join the Caffè boys, but on a late occasion (a mask public ball), at the principal Theater he went in the costume of a—*Monkey*, all but the tail, and acted his part so well as to draw attention from the Grand Duke and Duchess. Since then there have been several imitators at the mask balls but nothing to equal The American Baboon! It was his first and last appearance, having won fame enough to satisfy his ambition in that department of art.

My statue of Webster for Boston (8 feet high) is now at the bronze Foundry here, and will be cast in a week or two, the last arrangements in the process have been made, and the mould is drying by artificial heat, to receive the metal. It is a slow and difficult process. First, the model has to be moulded in manv

pieces, like the staves of a cask, and when done, the void is filled up with a composition of lime and other substances (I do not know what the exact compost is). Then the mould is removed, piece by piece until all is bared. The statue now appears in another material, which is of a deep brown colour. This is dried, within a thin brick encasement built around it, so as to allow the heat of a charcoal fire to ascend within it and about the statue. When quite dry, the casement is removed, and beginning at the head, the artist removes (carves away) the surface of the entire figure to the depth of about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch, and when this is done, the mould is replaced upon it, *but touches it no where*, it being that a space of $\frac{1}{4}$ inch intervenes for the bronze to occupy *finally*, but the bronze cannot yet be introduced, for the outer mould is, as yet, of plaster of Paris, which contains water, and if bronze were poured into it, an explosion would instantly follow. But melted bees wax may be poured in, and this is done, and it fills the space allotted for the bronze, and when cool the mould is removed and we now see the statue in its third state and substance; first it was in plaster of Paris, next in the composition above mentioned, and now it appears like a solid mass of wax.

Careful attention is now paid to the surface. The tracery of the mould jointings is all removed and retouching is given where it is needed, for as the wax is, so the bronze will be. And when all is done, *the same composition*, which now occupies the interior, is applied without, over the whole figure, and thickly.—a large mass in short, for this is the final mould for the bronze. This is again enclosed in a brick covering, and dried by a charcoal fire, and when dry the heat is increased so as, first to melt the wax and cause it to flow out at openings below, and then to burn up the small portion of wax that may remain in the pores of the mould.

But this last operation is performed in a pit, near the furnace, and when over, the pit is filled with earth, surrounding the mould, and the metal is let in at an opening above, as is usual with other castings. When the cast is made, the core, or inner mould, is removed by means of rammers, inserted at the orifices under the feet, and water is sometimes used to wash the interior clean.

You will perceive from all this, that bronze casting is not a very simple process, when *well done*, but it is simple enough when done as Mr. Clark Mills does it. His statue (equestrian) of Genl

Jackson was cast in 14 *pieces*, as I have been told. A common brass founder could do this, for *patch work* can be done anywhere.

The house fly is found in every part of the world, and it has been said that this is the only universal insect. Fleas are pretty general, and I am yet to hear of a country where *companions* may not be found to soothe our slumbers at night by their tasteful and touching attentions. But the truly universal insect is the Hum Bug!

The industrious and honest bee is restricted within certain latitudes. He can stand heat, but the extreme of cold kills him, and the mosquito and still more bewitching gnat both yield to the reign of Winter, even to the limit of his sceptre in Florida. But Humbug knows no heat and no cold. The droning of his wings mixes as readily in the chorus of the Iceland blast, as in the spicy zephyrs of Arabia. This is the true universal insect, and what is more, he carries a bottle of chloroform under his wing, with which to stupify his victims. Your Gallinipper of Mississippi carries a brick bat under his wing to whet his bill upon, but the true Humbug shows no bill until after the work is done. He knows his victims, the place and the hour, and perhaps Brother Jonathan is his victim, Washington City the place, and the present the hour—for of all the Humbugs of the present day, perhaps our present President is the greatest and of all the *humbugged*, the *Democracy* of our country. Barnum humbugged our people by means of his wits, and humbugged himself at last without them. He is now delivering lectures on Temperance in England! But Franklin Pierce—without wit or effort, humbugged himself and the nation together from the beginning. Perhaps he, too, will now turn lecturer on *Temperance*. It remains to be seen how far Mr. Buchanan will follow in his footsteps. He has promised to do so, and if he does not, why then, he, too is a humbug, and the South will call him one. But I must not humbug you with more than two sheets, and so with our united affectionate regards to you and yours, I am ever your friend,

H. POWERS.

Florence, February 27th, 1857.

Florence, May 7th, 1857.

N. Longworth, Esqr.:

My Dear Friend—Yours ending April 5th has been duly received, and I take the first leisure to answer it.

I have not sold "America", who still lies in her case packed up in my studio awaiting some decision, nor have I had any idea of selling this statue to any body since Congress gave me an order for it.

Mr. Pugh has been deceived or misinformed, not only in this, but in some other matters. A *colossal* statue of "America" after the model of the present one, was offered to President Pierce more than 20 months ago by Mr. Everett at my request, and the offer has several times been repeated and alluded to by Mr. Everett in letters to and conversation with the President, and yet the President has said to others besides Mr. Pugh, that this has never been done. That this has been only a cover to conceal the settled purpose of the President to gain time and thus throw the \$25,000 over to the surplus fund is now perfectly clear, for about 8 days before Mr. Buchanan took his place as President, Capt. Meigs (Engineer of the new Capitol Buildings) told Capt. Page (the officer who commanded the La Platte expedition) that if I would agree to make the statue colossal, he the President, would receive it and pay the amount appropriated.

Capt. Page lost no time in writing to Mr. Everett all this, who immediately wrote to the President an acceptance of the terms, and reminded him that that offer had been made to him more than 18 months previous. Mr. E. also wrote to both Capt. Meigs and Capt. Page upon the subject.

The President took no notice of Mr. Everett's letter, but Capt. Meigs replied to his, saying that he had called on the President who refused to do any thing. That Mr. Everett did make such an offer to the President so long ago, I am perfectly certain, for I have seen copies of his correspondence with President Pierce. The President pretended not to have understood him so, when Mr. Everett again repeated it in the most distinct terms. His refusal to do any thing at the last moment of his power, shows clearly that he never intended I should enjoy the benefit of the commission, and I am sorry to say, that there are strong reasons for believing that Capt. Meigs has supported, if indeed he has not been the instigator of this determination of Genl Pierce. They are as follows—

1st. Mr. Crawford of Rome has long since received a commission for a statue of "America" of colossal size for the top of the new dome of the Capitol.

2d. Capt. Meigs, with the concurrence of the President, has had the power to give this order, subject however, I believe, to an act of Congress to *pay for it*, and the money would be voted under the head of Capitol improvements. These matters usually come before committees, and not openly and separately before the body of Congress, and Congress votes in the gross upon the committees' report. In this manner Mr. Crawford, who has been over in Washington has succeeded in taking the commission for "America" out of my hands, and all,—long since Congress gave it to me. Capt. Meigs knows very well that it would be difficult to get Congress to agree to the purchase of two colossal statues of America for the Capitol.

3d. Mr. Crawford's statue was at first called "Liberty", but more lately it is called "America" to every body who visits his studio. Indeed, the name makes no difference, for both our statues might be called one or the other, it being, that they signify the same thing. Not only have I been supplanted in the commission but even the name of my statue has been taken, and the name,—for a statue originated with me, I believe, for I never heard of it before. Mr. Crawford was here on his last trip home and I told him how I had been treated. He had often before this seen my "America" in my studio, and he knew all about my Congress commission for it, very soon after the act had passed, and before he had any commission of the kind. He told me that he was going directly to Washington, where he should see the President and Capt. Meigs, and *he offered his services if he could do anything with them for me*. He did not so much as allude to his own commission, which he knew stood directly in the way of his serving me with the President and Capt. Meigs! But on leaving my studio, he left at my neighbor, Mr. Kinney's house a photograph of his own "America", then modelled in small at Rome! How he *had been* serving me with the President and Capt. Meigs I do not know nor can I say how he expected to serve me again when he made me the offer. I have told you however, what I do know, and leave you to form your own conclusions. I saw the photograph at Mr. Kinney's after Mr. Crawford had left Florence

and you may judge of my surprise. I was loath to say and especially to write any thing about all this, until I could learn more of the facts in the case.

Mr. Crawford has (since his return from America) been seized with a dreadful malady in one of his eyes which they say must end fatally—a cancer! But his statue on a colossal scale has already been modelled and cast in plaster preparatory to being sent to Munich to be cast in bronze!

Here then is the secret in a nutshell of all the apathy and prevarications of Capt. Meigs and President Pierce in regard to my Congress commission, and I desire that you will inform Hon'ble Mr. Pugh of it soon as you can.

If my commission has been renewed by the friendly efforts of Hon'ble Mr. Campbell, why then I suppose Capt. Meigs will endeavor if *he must act*, to substitute some new work by me for the "America". But this would be equivalent to the loss of it, for I should have to do my work all over again, and according to *his* estimates, at a price less than I can obtain and do from individuals. From \$4—to 5,000 a statue is enough, according to his views as he expressed in a letter to a lady friend of mine in Washington. Therefore I must insist upon my right by the order of Congress, and if this fails, I must appeal to that body for justice.

My own statue of "America" is as well adapted, if made colossal and in bronze to the position on the lantern of the new dome, as I could possibly make it if it had to be done over again. Indeed I do not know where it could be better placed.

Mr. Crawford's wife has a small fortune, enough, I hear, for the support of her children, and Mr. Crawford's Banker in Rome states that he has over \$80,000 worth of commissions in his studio. So, the plea, that the family need *my* commission cannot be set up with any kind of propriety. I too have a family which numbers twice his, and life is uncertain with us all; duty requires that I should insist upon their rights in this case.

I have forbourn to say more than is really necessary to an understanding of this question. The circumstances of the case are peculiar, and such as to make one hesitate between compassion and duty. It is hard under such aggravations to draw the line of propriety, and I have to write in haste.

That I have been most grievously wronged by somebody every

one must admit. Congress has given me a commission which the President has kept me out of for more than two years, while the same commission has been given to another, and is even now nearly executed. The President has attempted to defeat the design of Congress and throw the appropriation over to the surplus fund and I am not yet quite sure that he has not succeeded. If I have spoken too strongly about all this I shall be sorry.

The Marquiss Ponciattica wants 50 bottles or, I suppose 4 dozen would do, of the dry Catawba such as you have sent to me, and at the price you have stated, and if you can gratify him please have it sent by a vessel *direct to Leghorn* and not to Genoa or Marseilles, for the commissions are high. He wants to know what it will cost after reception here, in the most direct manner it can be got here, and this he can only know by experiment.

We are all quite well and all unite in affectionate regards to you and yours.

Ever gratefully your friend,

H. POWERS.

P. S.—The Marquiss will pay me here for the wine and I will direct Mr ——— of N. York to pay your agent. This shall be done when I get notice of the shipment. Please have the cases directed *to me*, and not to him.

Florence, June 24th, 1857.

N. Longworth, Esqr.:

My Dear Friend—I have received the letters, one from Genl Cass, and Judge McLean's reply—a copy of it—and am greatly indebted to the Judge for what he has said. I doubt that Genl Cass will do anything more, unless to oppose us. But I shall wait a while to see what may come.

The view Genl Cass takes is surprising when we consider that he has travelled abroad, and had opportunity for culture in taste for the fine arts. Why, he goes against the whole enlightened world, "and the rest of mankind". I will repeat here what he says, for you may not have retained a copy—"Mr. Pierce says in his letter that like myself he has no great relish for allegorical figures, and if I had the execution of the laws, that objection would be a fatal one with me. I would make a contract with Mr. Powers

for a statue or group fitted for the place. Mr. Pierce suggests that Capt. Meigs would be a proper person to consult as to the character of the work. I think he would, for he is a man of taste, and he is charged with the superintendence of the construction of the buildings." Capt. Meigs has been consulted it appears, but not by me, and he has already ordered a most colossal "allegorical figure" of America to be placed on the "house top" of the Capitol, there to proclaim against Genl Cass' judgment, both as to the subject "suited for the Capitol" and his selection of the man likely to ravour his views. I suppose that when Genl Cass finds this out, he will deem Capt. Meigs almost as untasteful and stupid in matter of art, as was Phidias, Michael Angelo, Raphael, Titian, Leonardo da Vinci, Thorwaldsen and others, who all, showed some partiality for "allegorical figures". But would Genl Cass strike our flag? It is an emblematical,—figurative—or allegorical flag. Would he blot out the eagle? tear off the stripes, and extinguish the stars? and after demolishing the United States arms, there is hardly a state in the Union which would not require his attention. "Virginia" has an allegorical figure trampling on chains, would he trample on the arms of Virginia? I suppose too, that in Genl Cass' opinion it is improper to write allegories. He would have every body express his views in direct terms, matter of fact language, and if so, what would he do with the Bible? The great Beast which rose out of the sea would soon lose his heads and horns if Genl Cass had the handling of him. If Genl Cass had lived in authority in the days of the Exodus, what havoc he would have made among the cherubims. There would have been shown no mercy to them, even upon the "Mercy Seat" he might have joined *the people* however in worshipping the golden *Calf*.

Our Saviour spoke in figurative language, but we are more enlightened now. Aesop wrote a lot of allegories (fables) but they are obsolete. It was a round about way of expressing a thing. Genl Cass considers himself a thorough Democrat, and he is so sure of it, that he is determined to force the conviction upon every body. If he had the execution of the law, (of Congress, mind) "that objection" (of his individual own) would be fatal to my claim. This kind of democracy is like a sentiment which would prevail among a band of Irish labourers *led on* by a locomotive at full speed *behind them*. But if Genl Cass' letter is

somewhat presumptuous what shall we say of Capt. Meigs' letter, an extract of which I have already sent to you? He understands my case, and tells me what to do, and Genl Cass endorses his advice. How simple it was in me not to take it. Then, the late President would have had an occasion for "consulting with those who have knowledge in such matters" and Capt. Meigs is one of 'em—Caleb Cushing is another, and Mr. Jefferson Davis is a third, and Genl Cass' letter shows that Mr. Pierce, Chairman of the Library Committee for the Senate, might have been a fourth. Messrs. Everett and —— were named by the late President also, but they would have been in a minority. Capt. Meigs was not named, but as he has "knowledge in such matters" (according to Genl Cass) doubtless he would have been consulted.

I am glad to perceive that the case is fully understood by Judge McLean and Mr. Everett, and I have taken some pains to have it understood by others. I now subjoin a letter received a few days since from a true friend in Rome:

"Dear Powers—In compliance with your request I have made the inquiries which you mentioned in your letter, and I herewith send you such information as I can gather.

"I find that Mr. Crawford received a commission from Government, about a year and a half ago for a colossal statue of 'America' to be placed on the lantern of the Capitol and that it is now being finished in plaster, preparatory to being sent to Munich to be cast in bronze. The commission could not have been given much longer ago than the time I mention, in as much as two years ago this last May Capt. Meigs consulted with our friend Mr. Rogers in regard to the statue to be placed on the lantern of the Capitol, discussing what kind of a figure it should be, etc., etc. This is about all I can ascertain in regard to the matter here, and I don't know that you will find my information of any service, as I have but small means of arriving at facts. Sincerely hoping that this matter, when seen in its proper light, will relieve all parties from the suspicion of unfair dealing, I remain", etc., etc.

I beg that you will put this information into the hands of Judge McLean and Mr. Pugh. It is hardly necessary to make comments upon it. The true objection to my statue of "America" is that another has been ordered by the late President and Capt. Meigs, and Congress will hardly *pay* for *two*, and the question is,

shall it be so? I believe that no one doubts that my statue as it is, or colossal, was intended by the act of Congress, and shall Capt. Meigs be allowed to divert this intention to another, and thus throw a work (upon which I have spent years) back upon my hands? A substitute may be offered, but this would force me to begin anew, and do all my work over again. I believe that Capt. Meigs is at the bottom of the whole difficulty. His letter shows it and if I am to be turned over to him as Genl Cass suggests, why then there is no hope, except from arms which are not strong, and that Providence which has thus far sustained them. I might indeed write to Mr. Buchanan, as you have suggested, but what good would that do, with Genl Cass and Capt. Meigs at his elbows? I have no hope except a forlorn one from Congress itself, and perhaps the sooner an appeal to the people and that body is publicly made the better, for after the statue intended to supplant mine shall have been *paid for*, it is hardly possible that any thing could be done.

I have written this in a hurry for today's mail, in order to avail of the first English steamer. I beg you to thank Mr. McLean a thousand times for his manly letter to Genl Cass. It did me good to read it, and with our united affectionate regards I remain
forever yours, H. POWERS.

You will perceive by my friend's letter that the statue in Rome "is *being finished* preparatory to sending to Munich", etc. Mr. Crawford made a small sketch for this statue before he went home, a photograph of which I have seen, but as he returned to Rome with that terrible disease (a cancer in one of his eyes) already upon him, and as he has been for some months absent in Paris and London for medical treatment, we must suppose that the large model has been done mainly by workmen in Mr. C.'s employ. Is there any one who will blame me, in the circumstances, for stating these facts?
H. P.

Florence, Jan. 14th, 1858.

N. Longworth, Esqr.:

My Dear Friend—I have had no letter from you this long while, but trust that all is well and that your interests have not been materially affected by the "Crisis" which has deranged the

monetary affairs of all Christendom. We have not felt it here however, to any extent, although travellers have suffered more or less, some have had to turn back for want of funds. Their connecting credit chains having given way in England or France some of those who left home millionaires, as they thought, have gone back only *centinarians*; others who stay, have had to cut down their establishments, dismiss *liveried* servants, and sing small upon half allowances. I pity such of my countrymen as have not attempted a grand show, by apeing the pomp and fashions of Europe, but have no compassion for the Mr. Mc's and G.'s, who after making fortunes at home, by boiling soap and dipping candles, come out here and sport carriages with coats of arms blazoned upon them, and trick out servants with liveries! One of these has added a De'. to his name, and the device on his card and carriage is a calve's head, a bull's head, and a winged horse! The swell he cut for a time was pretty considerable, but the news came at last of the smash at home and the suspension of his soap and candle establishment. Trying times, these for scrapple and marrowbones. The liveried servants were soon dismissed with the crested carriage, and now when one meets him out, he looks like an American citizen. I do not know if he still plays off the calve's head, the bull's head and the flying horse upon his visiting cards.

We have another specimen of this sort, who prides himself on a better turn out than the *Grand Duke's*. He has been seen indeed, dashing through the streets with *eight* pair of horses to his carriage, but this was a little too much to be bourne, and the police interfered.

Among our representatives abroad, there is another sort, who do all they can to make us ridiculous. These are wouldbe military men. The C——s and W——s, corn-stalk Generals. These get themselves invited to reviews when they can, and appear in magnificent uniforms and on high mettled chargers, galloping and prancing over the field, the wonder and terror of the natives. I have the card of one of them. It reads thus, "General W——, Commander of the forces of New York, U. S. A." Now U. S. A. may mean two things, United States of America, or United States *Army*, but these cards, like white gloves, serve for only once, they are soon found out. for there is always some one

in every place of note wicked enough to expose the imposture. This *General* gave a grand diplomatic dinner here, after such a discovery, and invited all the foreign and native ministers. His table was loaded with a profusion of good things, but a train of most unfortunate coincidences prevented these dignitaries from attending. The British Minister had a violent attack of the gout, the Spanish Minister had a severe cold, the Russian Minister had just received an important dispatch and the native Ministers had been called in Council with the Grand Duke. Even the Pope's Nuncio, who came, could not stay for coffee, but looked gravely at his watch and evidently smelt a rat. The General took the hint, and was soon off for other diggins.

These are samples of American snobs abroad, but we have another class of American Travellers who do honour to their country by their unpretending gentlemanly manners, and it is a great pleasure to meet with them out here.

The news from home is just now very exciting. It is now proved past a doubt that there has been and still is great wrong in Kansas. The great majority of the people have been and are oppressed by the present and the last *democratic* administration, and attempt has been made to force upon them a slavery constitution, and the most tyrannical means *have been employed* for this purpose. Every Governor of Kansas has declared it, and now even Senator Douglas, the author originally of all the trouble, boldly proclaims it. The entire South upholds the administration in this wrong! Is it not high time for all good men to rally, and do what they can to oppose such tyranny?—such usurpation of the rights of the people? I think they will now, and that we shall soon see the wrong doers in a *fix*, at least I hope so. The South have pushed this matter to an unbearable point, and the fate of Kansas, if I mistake not, will decide the fate of slavery. I am not an abolitionist, but go tooth and nail against slavery extension. We have had enough of it. It has been the cause of nearly all our troubles as a people, and it is time that it was bound down to its present limits.

I have no longer any expectations from the Government in regard to the Congress appropriation. Mr. Everett writes me that nothing has been done, and nothing will be unless I go home and see the authorities about it. This I would do if it was only to

transact business with the President himself. But I have reason to believe that he would refer me to Capt. Meigs, who would expect me to work for the same price paid to other artists, and I can do better than that without going to Washington.

I have received no answer to the letter I wrote long ago to the Hon'ble Mr. Campbell, nor from the one I sent to Judge McLean. But I hardly expected answers, both those gentlemen must have much to occupy their time.

I am afraid that my statue of Mr. Webster has gone to the bottom. It had been out 105 days last news from home and not heard from. Vessels which left Smyrna a month later had arrived. But the statue is insured to the full amount, \$12,000, so that I shall lose nothing but the time required to recast it. I was bound to deliver the statue and the insurance was purchased by me. The \$12,000 will therefore be mine on making the contract good by another statue. If this work is lost it will be the third statue of mine which has sunk on its way home, but the Eve and Mr. Calhoun's statue were both saved. 60 days is the usual time for reaching Boston or N. York by sail from Leghorn, and vessels out over 90 days are rarely heard from. I still hope, however that the "Oxford" is not lost. She was represented to me as a first rate American ship.

I shall try to visit England next spring, if I do not go home, and if nothing occurs to prevent I shall take my statue of "America" to London and have it shown at Messrs. Graves, Pall Mall, where the Greek statue was exhibited 10 or 12 years ago so successfully. I have some English friends of much influence who have advised this course, and they think there will be no difficulty in disposing of it to advantage. The figure has been lying in its case in my studio over a year, waiting for some decision of the Government, and I cannot well afford to keep it much longer. I still regard it as my best work, and little did I dream, even, that it would remain so long on my hands. Commissions have been given to other artists by the Government and the work has been executed since Congress passed the appropriation for me. They have had no difficulty, while my claim, although I am the oldest of American sculptors, has been treated with the most marked neglect, not to say contempt. Surely I cannot be justly blamed if I now seek a foreign market for this national subject. If I would

work fast like some of the sculptors employed by the Government, and get Tom Dick and Harry to *model* for me as they have done, then I could work cheaply and make money. But this I never did and never will do. It shall never be said that I put my name to a work not wholly my own. I could tell you some things that have come to my knowledge about this, but I am tired of writing upon this subject, as you must be of hearing about it. Read Mr. Ward's (brother to Mrs. Crawford) remarks in the *Evening Post* of N. York, in relation to the Virginia Monument, and Mr. Randolph Rodgers who has been appointed to finish the work, and you will see how Mr. Crawford got on so fast with his commissions, although absent himself much of the time, in America and elsewhere. I cannot work *by proxy*, and therefore on account of the price no work of mine is likely to be seen in or about our Capitol. This is the truth and let it go for what it is worth.

If my Webster statue is lost then, after replacing it with another bronze cast, I suppose there would be coming to me about \$10,000 insurance, clear of the expenses and if so, then I should want to invest the money in real estate, or on interest, well secured on real estate. Do you know how and where I could do this to advantage? I have about as much invested in the N. York Central Rail Road, but in future, what I can spare I wish to place upon a surer footing.

I feel that we have stayed here about long enough, and we now want to go home, but where that home is to be remains to be determined upon, and how we are to live there is another thing to be considered. I expect to work hard all my days, and am happiest when at work, but have always desired to have it in my power to work for pleasure, and not necessarily for money. The Government appropriation, had it been carried out in the spirit in which it was made, would, added to what I have, and what I could sell my finished works for, have set me all right in this respect. But as that cannot now be relied upon, I must make the best of what I have.

I suppose that we could live in the neighborhood of Cincinnati (a family of 10 persons) for about \$2,500 a year, by practicing strict economy. We should not care to live in the city, and I own a house on Walnut Hills (Lane Seminary property-lease land) which by some additions might accommodate us. Now supposing

that I could raise about \$30,000, could this sum be invested in a manner to realize any thing like the amount we should require to live upon? If I could, why then I would run the risk of being able to earn the balance, and I would go home soon as I could arrange to leave here, which might be in a year more or less. I have had some thoughts of going to Kansas where I have a cousin (John P. Richardson) and Brother in Law, Mr. Henry T. Adams who is now Mayor of Leavenworth City, but my wife will not listen to the name of any place but Cincinnati, and if we can manage to live there I should much prefer it myself. I do not intend however to give up my studio here at once. I could model at home, bring the models here and have them blocked out in marble, so that the finishing alone would be done at home. Thus I could spend most of my time at home with the family, and in time perhaps get a few workmen to go home with me and live there, a thing most of them are loath to do, for they love their own country as much as I do mine.

As I am now doing, a few years more would render us independent, but those few years! 3 of our children are grown up, and we do not want to leave them abroad when we go, and this might happen, for at the age of election, we cannot always control our children. When we do go, we want to go altogether, and I would sooner go home a pauper, than leave one of my children behind.

When I look back upon the last 20 years (we have now been 20 years abroad), I find much reason to thank God, for the care He has taken of us. We have never really *suffered* for any thing. He has supplied all necessary wants, and more, He has placed us almost beyond want. To have reared so large a family in a foreign country, and by the practice of so precarious an art, is a thing surely to feel grateful for, but His agents must not be forgotten, nor did we forget you on the last Christmas day.

Your own sparkling Catawba graced our table. There they stood with their white cravats on, and *crinoline* forms, not empty and braced out by whalebone or steel hoops, but substantially full and resting on their own broad bottoms. We drank to the health of the great apostle of Temperance in America.

The whole family joins me in wishing you and yours a most happy New Year, and with affectionate regard, I am,

Ever your sincere friend,

HIRAM POWERS.

Is my old friend Miles Greenwood alive, or is he gone with many others whom I knew and esteemed so highly 20 years ago? I ask this question from having seen in a *Boston* paper an article which had the words—"Our own lamented Miles Greenwood". The article was in relation to steam fire engines.

If he is alive, and in your walks you could manage to see him, I should like to have you show him what I am about to say.

You know my love of mechanics. It was one of my earliest affections, and I have never been weaned from the *mother* which supported me before I knew any thing of sculpture. Some of my happiest days were spent in Watson's Clock Factory, and in my little work shop in Dorfeuills' Museum, and here during the 20 years we have been abroad, I have devoted many an evening when I could do nothing else, to mechanical contrivances, and I have invented several improvements which I think would pay well if *exploited*. I have taken out patents for two of them, my hollow open file and a punching machine. The file cannot clog, it being that the filings pass through it, and therefore, it is just the thing for copper smiths, plumbers, and hard wood workers, also for workers in bone, Ivory, horn, etc., etc.

The punching machine is so simple and easily made, that one of them capable of punching *boiler iron* can be afforded for less than 15 dolls. The plan is wholly new, and it is so compact and strong, that I might almost say, it cannot be broken and will hardly ever wear out. I have four of these nearly finished and intend to bring one of them to Cincinnati when I go home. I have heard that Greenwood has a fine machine shop and makes a great variety of works in iron, and it may be that on seeing what I have invented he would like to join me in carrying into practical use these contrivances, and if he is favourably disposed, I would say nothing elsewhere about them until after seeing him. I think he would soon be convinced of their practicability and utility. I have other contrivances, but these could be at once *exploited*.

You need say nothing to Greenwood about all this unless quite convenient. I would not have you go at all out of your way to do it.

H. P.

Florence, Oct. 3d, 1858.

My Dear Friend—My last to you was in relation to Mr. Kellogg's pamphlet. I thought it best to put you in possession of the facts in the case, and on your guard against the plausible style of this attack.

Mr. K. must have been at considerable expense with his pamphlet; scores of them have been sent to many places. A man here, by the name of Gould, has been distributing them about, but I do not find that any impression has been made, except that Mr. K. and his friend Gould have got their labour for their pains. The idea prevails that the pamphlet is a card or an advertisement of Mr. Kellogg's Picture Gallery at "19. bis rue Fountain, Saint Georges, Paris."

I do not find that there is occasion to notice the Pamphlet in a public manner, and Mr. K. is welcome to all the good it will do him or the harm it may do me.

The wine and Catawba Brandy has arrived in good order, and we are exceedingly obliged to you for it. It will last us a long while.

My affair with the Government now rests upon the decision of the President. Mr. Everett and Mr. Pierce (Chairman of the Library Committee) have recommended to him, that I should execute statues of Washington and Franklin—each 8 feet high, for \$10,000 a piece, and allow the surplus \$5,000 to lay over for future consideration. I had proposed this to Mr. Everett, and in July last he, conjointly with Mr. Pierce, proposed it to the President, but has as yet had no reply, and Mr. Everett thinks, that nothing will be done, although he has written a 2d time to the President, unless I go to Washington myself and attend to it.

I find it hard to leave my large family and make a voyage to Washington, to settle a matter requiring not more than perhaps 15 minutes of the President's own time to adjust. He promised to agree to whatever Mr. Everett and Mr. Pierce would recommend, but does not, and it may turn out in the end, that my journey home will result in nothing from the Government.

I was in hopes that Mr. Everett's 2d letter to the President would be noticed in a week or two, but two weeks have passed without another word from Mr. E., and if I shall hear nothing in

another week, and all is well with my family, I shall start for home. I shall send off the Webster statue (now done for the 2d time in bronze) this week and the statue of "America," the first to Boston and the last to N. York.

I did hope, that there would be no necessity for going home until next spring or summer when we could all go together, for in case of sickness in my family, we have no intimate friends here to assist my wife, and her health is feeble. I shall be ill at ease until back again and my stay will be as short as possible. But I shall come to you, if spared.

My greatest anxiety is about our 3d daughter, who has had 3 attacks of Rheumatic Fever, and could hardly survive another. She requires our constant attention.

Ex-President Pierce is expected here in a few days, with his wife who is consumptive. I have had several conversations with Mr. Hawthorne, and Mr. Mallet, both intimate friends of his, and they say, that there must have been some mistake, or that Genl Pierce must have been misled in regard to myself, as relates to the Government appropriation, and Mr. Hawthorne recommended me to see him, and explain the matter. I told him that that was a thing I should never do, and that if any explanations were to be made, I had been made the victim, and they were due to me. Mr. Hawthorne (the author) seemed surprised when I told him how I had been treated by Genl Pierce and regretted that he should not see him on his arrival here, as he was about to leave for Rome. I have little doubt myself, that Genl Pierce was influenced,—enough has come to my knowledge to make this more than probable, and it is quite likely that similar influences are now operating on Mr. Buchanan, who 22 years ago took up the cause of Persico the Italian sculptor so warmly and made a speech for him in the Senate. He now neglects his own countryman and to all appearance at least, follows in the footsteps of his predecessor,—for he made promises only to raise hopes which he never meant should be realized.

O! money! money! No, I will not say *money*, but necessity, that's the word. If it were not for necessity I would stay here until we could all go home together. We lost one of our dear children last year by Rheumatic Fever, and my wife came near following her. She was reduced to little more than bones, and the

same thing may happen again, and I away! Our hopes are, that change of climate may do good to my wife and daughter, and that we may be able to live at home. I go before them to secure the means.

If I am not partial to democratic Presidents, and some of the principles of Democracy, can you blame me? "Swing your hat for me, split your throat hurrahing for me, and when I am elected, then come to me for your reward"; all others may go to the dogs. —These are views which I could never entertain and the last candidate I would vote for would be he who would reward the act. There should be no *mere* personal considerations in politics. When men and not measures predominate, then goodbye to our institutions.

One of my objects, after seeing you, will be to find a suitable place in or near Cincinnati to locate my family. I have thought of going over to Kentucky where I could get more ground for the same money, and as there will be a bridge across the river, it would suit me just as well. I must keep a studio here for some years longer, and spend some of my time abroad, but I want a place to call *home* and where I can plant trees, make a garden and have rest when I can no longer work. The place I now have on Walnut Hills is too small, and besides it does not offer a view of the river, an object I should always like to behold. This is the darling dream of my wife, who thinks that the original paradise was situated at, or not far from Cincinnati.

Pray remember me most kindly to your family, to Mr. Greene and other friends, and believe me ever affectionately yours,

HIRAM POWERS.

N. Longworth, Esqr.

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